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## Sustainable Trails

Sustainability is more than just green living tips of course. The term sustainability encompasses the ideals of creation and maintenance of facilities and land features using the least amount of resources while planning for the benefit of future generations. In this vein, Brenda Belensky, Natural Resource Manager in the Division of Natural Resources has been working to develop management plans to achieve best practices for sustainable trails across the County. How many miles of trails are under the purview of Howard County Department of Recreation and Parks? We maintain 60 miles of trails! Do you use Howard County trails? As part of the process, public comment about our trails is being recorded through an online survey. The trail use survey is available on the Department of Recreation and Park's home page. Take it today: <http://www.tinyurl.com/trailusesurvey>.

## Fun Facts and Links

Winter Sustainability tips from Scavolini Magazine:  
<http://tinyurl.com/qgmwme2>

Did you know Howard County has recognized Green Schools? See the Maryland Association for Environmental Education website for more info:  
<http://maec.org/green-schools/>

Want to promote sustainability via social media? 54 Tweetable Eco-Friendly Tips and Sustainability Facts in 140 Characters or Less:  
<http://tinyurl.com/nx7p7wx>

10 Ways to Green Your Holiday  
<http://tinyurl.com/2336g49>

## Adopt-a-Road Summary

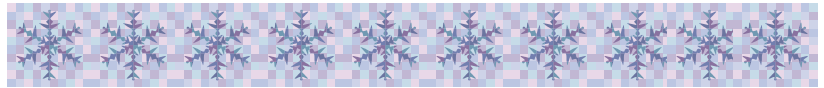
Howard County Rec & Parks has just completed its first complete year in the Adopt-a-Road program. This past year, seventeen people participated in scheduled clean-ups. Total trash collected was 60 lbs. and total trash collected that was recycled was 14 lbs. Next year the goal is to recycle more than we send to the landfill. Speaking of next year, join us at 10:30 AM in the lobby of HCRP Headquarters on the following dates for 2015 Adopt-a-Road Clean-ups.

March 4<sup>th</sup>, 10:30 AM  
June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10:30 AM  
Sept. 2<sup>nd</sup>, 10:30AM  
Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup>, 10:30 AM



## Important Dates

2015 will be the International [Year of Soils](#)  
January 5—[National Bird Day](#)  
February 2—[World Wetlands Day](#)  
March 21—[World Forestry Day](#)  
March 22—[World Water Day](#)



### Sustainable Celebration!

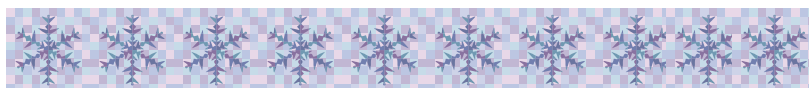
This Wednesday, December 17th, Recreation & Parks Employees will be gathering to celebrate the holiday season together. Did you know that Sustainability will once again be practiced during this event? Thanks to the creativity of the Holiday Party Planning Committee, additional steps are being taken to reduce the carbon footprint of this gathering. We ask that you join in however possible and contribute to the greening of our annual celebration.



1. **Reusing Decorations**—Employees will be sharing their holiday decorations, therefore limiting the purchase of new materials to help create a festive atmosphere. Local youth enrolled in our Recreation Licensed Childcare program are creating the centerpieces with reused materials.
2. **Central Location Facility**—Headquarters is accessible from all parts of the county and a large number of employees work in or around the main building, therefore limiting travel to the event.
3. **Carpooling**—Many employees will be traveling from off-site locations with their co-workers, therefore limiting the number of vehicles being used to get everyone to the event.
4. **Bring Your Own**—Employees are encouraged to bring their own, plates, bowls, utensils, FESTIVE cups and cloth napkins to limit the number of disposable items being used at the event.
5. **Green Products**—For those who attend without their own dinnerware, the holiday party committee will be providing actual dinner plates and green versions of the other items for your use.
6. **Resource Recovery**—A Resource Recovery Station will be set up at the event. Look for details as to how we are limiting what goes into the trash cycle and eventually the landfill.
7. **Table Decor**—The Holiday Party will not use disposable plastic tablecloths and instead will provide dining placemats made from recycled paper.
8. **Light Recycling**—Employees are invited to bring their old, non-working strands of holiday lights to be recycled. We will collect and transport them to the local participating retailer in order to save you a trip.
9. **Sustainable Contests**—Employees are invited to participate in various contests including: throwback photos, guess the number of corks and festive cups. You'll notice how Sustainability is being practiced in these contests.
10. **Holiday cheer is always a renewable resource.**



**Specials thanks again to the Holiday Party Planning Committee for all of their hard work on creating a fun, festive and sustainable event. Enjoy!**



### Holiday Light Recycling

Recycle your broken incandescent holiday lights at **My Organic Market (MOMs)** through January 31st and receive a coupon to **HolidayLEDs.com**. New LED holiday lighting uses significantly less energy, produces less heat, and you can connect more lights together at once. Be sure to follow all safety instructions, and don't overload your electrical system. Last year, MOMs customers recycled 64,273 feet of holiday lights! You can also send those uncooperative old strands to **Christmas Light Source** or recycle with electronics at the Alpha Ridge Landfill, but please do not put them out with your curbside recycling – the cords damage the processing equipment! For more information visit [HowardCountyRecycles.org](http://HowardCountyRecycles.org).



### Merry Mulch Disposal / Tree Recycling

**Don't Forget to Merry Mulch.** Dispose of your fresh tree after the holiday season the merry way: take advantage of a tree recycling program turning trees into mulch! There are tree drop-off sites in several locations around the county and Howard County residents can also place fresh trees out with their curbside yard trim through January 16<sup>th</sup>. Be sure to remove all tinsel, garland, ornaments, lights, tree stands, etc before recycling. Some artificial trees with metal components may be collected in the scrap metal area at the Alpha Ridge Landfill. Find out more at [www.howardcountymd.gov/merrymulch.htm](http://www.howardcountymd.gov/merrymulch.htm) Other holiday green tips include using newspapers, comics, maps or cloth wrapping as gift wrap, visiting online sites to opt out of catalog delivery and recycling holiday junk mail and packaging.

